

192 THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY

Jarse op n hearth. The lamps were lit, and an open silver sor'nt-rase stood, with some siphons of soda-water and large cut-Ju?s tumblers, on a little marqueterie table.

"You see your servant made me quite at home, Dorian, He CVV-T rae Everything I wanted, including your best gold-tiprrt?-' cigarettes." He is a most hospitable creature. I like

hirl: .v.^.-ii" 'setter than the Frenchman you used to have. What

:^s h-.^cme of the Frenchman, by the by?" Dorian shrugged his shoulders. "I believe he married Lady

Jcadlev's maid, and has established her in Paris as an English dr.-^rviaker. *Angloniame* is very fashionable over there now,

I hear. It seems silly of the French, doesn't it? But—do you know?—he was not at all a bad servant. I never liked him,

but I had nothing to complain about. One often imagines things that are quite absurd. He was really very devoted to

me, and seemed quite sorry when he went away. Have another brandy and soda? Or would you like hock and seltzer?

I always take hock and seltzer myself. There is sure to be some in the next room."

"Thanks, I won't have anything more," said the painter, taking his cap and coat off, and throwing them on the bag

that he had placed in the corner. "And now, my dear fellow, I want to speak to you seriously. Don't frown like that.

You make it so much more difficult for me."

"What is it all about?" cried Dorian, in his petulant way, flinging himself down on the sofa. "I hope it is not about myself. I am tired of myself to-night. I should like to be somebody else."

"It is about 3'ourself," answered Hallward, in his deep voice, "and I must say it to you. I shall only keep you half an hour.*"

Dorian sighed, and lit a cigarette. "Half an hour!" he murmured.

"It is not much to ask of you, Dorian, and it is entirely for your own sake that I am speaking. I think it right that you should know that the most dreadful things are being said against you in London."

* I don't want to know anything about them. I love scandals about other people, but scandals about myself don't interest me. They have not got the charm of novelty."

"They must interest you, Dorian. Every gentleman is interested in his good name. You don't want people to talk of you as something vile and degraded. Of course you have